

Urban Caucus Meeting

Friday, September 19, 2003 (Sterling Hotel, Sacramento)
(prior to Advisory Committee Meeting)

Participants:

Kirk Brewer

Bill Jacoby

Grace Chan

Steve Macaulay

Mary Ann Dickinson

Frances Spivy-Weber

Alan Gribnau

Elizabeth Patterson (DWR)

Major Outcomes

1. Participants agreed that each caucus member would review all of the draft chapters of Volume 1.
2. Initial review would focus on “show stoppers,” i.e., important “heart pounding” matters which a participant believes are completely heading down the wrong track.
3. Review would be completed by Friday, October 2nd. Comments can be emailed to Gregory Weber & caucus participants. A follow-up conference call or meeting will likely occur during the week of October 6th.
4. Participants generated a list of comments and suggestions for improving the draft (see below.) One area that produced the most discussion led to a recommendation that DWR assemble a task force to identify, using the South Coast as a test, local data sources that are currently missing from the regional reports.

Comments & Suggestions

1. The facilitation team needs to get urban water agencies more actively involved in the review & comment process
2. The “summary” chart (of potential water strategy contributions) needs revision:
 - a. Add a column of cross-references to the specific pages in Ch. 5 where a given strategy is discussed in detail
 - b. The summary chart needs to reinforce the message that there are ongoing discussions about all of the numbers set out in the chart; the numbers will change; they’re not meant to be fixed; they’re targets; put in 24 point type at the top of the chart “This is a Living Document”
 - c. There needs to be some explanation of why urban wue improvements appear to be so high and ag’s so low; one suggestion: link it to the costs of water

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- d. The non-additive nature of the chart was confusing and disturbing
- e. There needs to be references to the specific portions of Vol. 4 where the derivation of the numbers is set out
- 3. Throughout Volume 1, watch for sound bites that can be used counterproductively
 - a. Consider developing some of our own sound bites to reinforce the overall messages of the Update
- 4. The organization of Chapter 5 and the layout of the individual sections of that chapter was working well as was the overall format of Volume 1
- 5. The messages of maintaining infrastructure found in Chapter 5 was working well
 - a. There was a suggestion to consider thinking of some strategies as “soft infrastructure,” that also needed to be maintained. E.g., floodplains, watersheds
- 6. The use of Recycling Task Force data and analysis was working well
- 7. The continued almost exclusive focus on MWD in the South Coast regional report was troubling to several participants; the message that “MWD is not the South Coast” does not seem to be getting through to DWR staff despite repeated comments by some caucus participants
 - a. There is ample data available from various South Coast agencies that DWR staff has not seemed to be aware of or use; these include entities working on watershed management and stormwater management, as well as water districts, groundwater districts and counties. For example, where is information on Ventura County? San Bernardino? Castaic Lake? At the very least, the problem needs to be explicitly recognized and qualitative descriptions of some of these other South Coast water providers needs to be included
 - b. The Urban Water Management Plans do not seem to be being used in Update 2003 at all. It was suggested by one participant that lack of CEQA review and use of different protocols limited the usefulness of these plans, and that there were no ramifications for local agencies that provided bad information; other participants, however, thought that the differences were not an ultimate barrier to their usefulness. In particular, for quality control purposes, there was a suggestion that you could look at the aggregate of UWMP data and compare it with numbers obtained from other data sources
 - c. Jonas Minton should put together a task force of DWR staff and South Coast water interests that would use the South Coast area as a test case to identify ways to get more local data available, both for the final regional reports that will be published in December 2004, as well as looking towards future updates

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- d. It was recognized that DWR does not have the staff to do all the work that caucus members would like done; it was suggested that caucus members (i.e., their agencies) might well need to contribute staff time to these efforts
- e. Alternatively, or in conjunction with the above, the California Urban Water Conservation Council might expand its efforts in reviewing the water use efficiency components of urban water management plans to add to their data base information from non-members